blasts in American cities on September, 11, 2001; if so, how the crude import prices per barrel have increased/fluctuated during the following months; and

(b) how the crude import bill for the current year has risen, taken in the context of Budget perceptions for the year, the Government's reactions thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) After the World Trade Centre disaster in USA on September 11, 2001, price of brent crude oil first increased from the level of USS 28.42 per barrel on 11th September to US$ 29.15 per barrel on 14th September. Thereafter, the price of crude oil have been showing as steady decline.

(b) Decline in the prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market will have a favourable impact on the oil import bill for the year 2001-2002.

Fuel testing laboratories

1611. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that adulteration of petrol and diesel largely goes undetected;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether sufficient number of fuel testing laboratories are available in the country; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Oil Marketing Companies have evolved a system of periodic/surprise checks of retail outlets for detecting adulteration. Apart from this, the Anti Adulteration Cell set up in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas also carries out inspection of retail oulets for checking adulteration.

(c) and (d) Oil Companies have a number of laboratories at their refineries/installations apart from having Mobile laboratories in the country for testing of fuels. Oil Compames augment the number of laboratories from time to time, if required. In addition, various other agencies like Indian

Institutes of Technology, Indian Institute of Petroleum, Forensic Laboratories, Defence Laboratories, Society for Petroleum Laboratory, etc., have also got facilities for testing of fuels.

New oil and gas field in western offshore

1612. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has discovered new oil and gas field in the Western Offshore about six Km. East of Bassein gas field;

(b) the estimate of oil and gas expected to be extracted from this field; and

(c) by when it is likely to flow?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Estimation of recoverable oil and gas from the field can be done after the completion of the ongoing exploration and delineation of the field.

Impact of devaluation of rupee on price of petroleum products

†1613. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH'LALAN':

SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of petroleum products and crude oil to be imported get hiked as a result of devaluation of rupee; and

(b) if so, the price, hike on the import of crude oil as a result of devaluation of rupee during the last months of 2001-2002?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.